Handing over rights on rivers to private corporations

4081. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the water rights on four rivers in Chhattisgarh have been handed over to private consortia;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard;

(c) how many rivers in the country have been handed over to private consortia; and

(d) whether there is any constitutional approval for handing over rights on rivers to private corporations?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) The Government of Chhattisgarh has informed that no **water** rights on any river in Chhattisgarh has been handed over to private consortia.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) State Governments have not informed about handing over of any of the rivers in the country to private consortia.

(d) No, Sir.

Conference on safe drinking water supply

4082. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government have taken, till date, to provide safe drinking water supply to every habitation in rural/urban areas as per decision taken at the two days State Minister's Conference held in New Delhi in January-February, 2006;

(b) whether any action plan was chalked out at about mentioned Conference, if so, the details thereof and follow-up action taken thereon, till date; and

(c) what budgetary allocations were made during 2006-07 in com parison to 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) A Conference of State Ministers in charge of rural drinking water supply and sanitation was organized by the Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources on 31st January-1st February 2006 in New Delhi. During the State Minister Conference, held in New Delhi on 31st January-1st February 2006, it was resolved to achieve the goals set under Bharat Nirman in a time bound manner in the next 4 years. The Bharat Nirman envisages coverage of 55067 uncovered habitations during 2005-2006. 10041 nos. uncovered habitations have been covered. The targets for the year 2006-2007 have been fixed and the State-wise allocation of Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) funds have been finalized.

(b) No action plan was chalked out during the Conference. However, the important recommendations of the Conference is given at enclosed Statement (See Below).

(c) Rs. 5200 crore has been allocated for Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) for the year 2006-07. The allocation for 2005-06 was Rs. 4060 crore.

Statement

Recommendations of the Conference on Safe Drinking Water Supply (Annex to Rajya Sabha Unstarred Question No. 4082 for 23.5.2006) The following major recommendations were made in the Conference:

1. Total Sanitation Campaign:

   * Increase in unit cost of household and anganwadi toilets and inclusion of solid and liquid waste management in the project.

   * Removing community contribution from construction of school and anganwadi toilets.

   * A national and State level mass media campaign should be launched on television and radio for creation of awareness.

   * Population slabs for awarding Nirmal Gram Puraskar should be increased.

2. Implementation of ARWSP in the Eleventh Plan for institutionalization of community participation:

* Institutionalization of community participation and involvement of Gram Panchayats in a phased manner and only one rural water supply scheme from the Eleventh Plan.

* Community contribution of at least 10% of the estimated capital cost of the scheme to be an integral part of all rural drinking water supply schemes. It may be only 2.5% for SC/ST habitations. The extent of community contribution could be paid in cash, labour, land or material or a combination of these. The minimum contribution per household to be decided by the State. In difficult single village schemes, quality affected habitations, piped water supply from distant sources and multi-village schemes, the State may decide on quantum of community contribution for common facilities.

0 Central and State Governments will bear the balance capital cost of approved schemes (after deducting the community contribution). In case of difficult single village schemes and multi-village schemes, Government agency will bring water from the source to the entry point of the village. The capital cost of schemes upto the entry point of habitation will be shared by Central and State Government. The distribution network of water supply inside the village/habitation will be constructed with involvement of the Gram Panchayat/Village Water and Sanitation Committees, with community contribution and subsequent Operation & Maintenance. They will be assisted by PHED in the process.

3. Coverage and its norms, technology options, source and system sustainability, water quality monitoring and surveillance.

* The distance of the water source should be 0.5 kilometre instead of 1.6 kilometre and 30 metres elevation instead of 100 metres in hilly areas to lessen the drudgery of carrying water from distant source.

* In hilly areas, the population criteria should be relaxed to cover habitations with 50 persons or more or more than 10 households to all.

° There is need for earmarking funds for rooftop/catchment based rainwater harvesting and this water may be treated as coverage as distinguished from recharging of ground water.

* Women and youth of rural areas be trained to operate and maintain water supply systems. Manuals/guidelines be developed for this purpose.

0 Distribution systems be improved for minimizing the leakages. States should come up with means to prevent leakages in the distribution systems to make it economical with cost recovery.

* Good production centres/sanitary marts/self-help groups, etc. should be utilized for supply of spareparts, training of local rural youth and women as mechanics for Operation and Maintenance of water sources and also involved in water quality monitoring and maintenance.

4. Some of the States have requested for the funding pattern of ARWSP between Centre and State to be in the ratio of 75:25 and North Eastern States have requested for this ratio to be 90:10 for consideration of the Government.

Availability of cultivative land for irrigation

t4083. SHRI MANGANI LAL MANDAL: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to reconstitution of Bihar in 2000 and its partition thereafter, cultivable land has decreased;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as per the second report of State Irrigation Commission, the irrigation capacity of the available cultivable land could not be fully regenerated; and

(c) if so, what is the approach of Government indicating the complete details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (PROF. SAIF-UD-DIN SOZ): (a) As per the information made available by Government of Bihar, the gross cultivable area of undivided Bihar was 108.02 lakh hectare whereas after bifurcation of the State, the gross cultivable area of Bihar State is 79.57 lakh hectare.

f Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.